

<b>TITLE</b>	<b>Wokingham Safeguarding Children Board (WSCB) Annual Report 2012 – 13</b>
<b>FOR CONSIDERATION BY</b>	Children's Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 18 September 2013
<b>WARD</b>	None Specific
<b>STRATEGIC DIRECTOR</b>	Pauline Maddison, Interim Strategic Director, Children's Services

**OUTCOME / BENEFITS TO THE COMMUNITY**

Effective high level, strategic and monitoring arrangements are in place to co-ordinate the protection of children from significant harm; and to promote children's welfare through universal services in early years and schools and by partner agencies in the Council, health, police and probation.

**RECOMMENDATION**

The Overview and Scrutiny Committee is invited to note the contents of the Annual Report and the progress of the WSCB.

**SUMMARY OF REPORT**

The Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB) is the Statutory over-arching multi-agency strategic committee with responsibility for co-ordinating arrangements of local agencies to safeguard children up to the age of 18. It does not provide services directly. It has a leadership and monitoring role.

'Safeguarding' means ensuring arrangements to promote the welfare of children and to protect children where there are grounds to believe that they are at risk of significant harm. The roles of LSCBs are governed by statute and guidance.

It is the responsibility of the Local Authority to ensure that there is a LSCB and to appoint an Independent Chair. It is the responsibility of the Partner Agencies of the LSCB to ensure that they provide senior membership to the Board and support its work. The direct work with children and their families is not done by the LSCB but by its member agencies such as early years, health, independent and voluntary providers, schools, police, the Council's children's services and the probation service.

Wokingham SCB was judged to be 'effective' by OFSTED in the unannounced inspection of arrangements to safeguard children in November 2012. At that point the LSCB had embarked on a programme of transformation to be a LSCB which holds its partners to account more rigorously.

The Annual Report for 2012 – 13 describes and evaluates the work of the LSCB and Partner Agencies, what has been achieved and what more needs to be done. It also sets out the Business Plan for 2013 – 14.

## Background

LSCBs are required by the Children Act 2004 and governed by regulations and guidance.

## Analysis of Issues

These are set out in the Chairman's Foreword and the Executive Summary of the Report.

## FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS OF THE RECOMMENDATION

	How much will it Cost/ (Save)	Is there sufficient funding – if not quantify the Shortfall	Revenue or Capital?
Current Financial Year (Year 1)	N/A		
Next Financial Year (Year 2)	N/A		
Following Financial Year (Year 3)	N/A		

### Other financial information relevant to the Recommendation/Decision

There will be a budget pressure if the LSCB is required to undertake a statutory Serious Case Review or an independent child practice review. Although a small contingency is held for this it requires the commissioning of independent reviews, under the revised guidance.

### Cross-Council Implications (how does this decision impact on other Council services and priorities?)

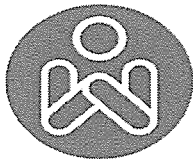
The report covers all Council services in as much as they directly provide, commission, support or regulate services to families and children.

### Reasons for considering the report in Part 2

### List of Background Papers

WSCB Annual Report 2012 – 13

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wokingham  
safeguarding children board

# Annual Report 2012- 2013

Discussed at the Wokingham Safeguarding Children Board on 11th September 2013

Wokingham Safeguarding Children Board  
c/o Wokingham Borough Council  
Shute End  
Wokingham  
Berkshire  
RG40 1BN

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**Local Safeguarding Children Board**

The Children Act 2004 requires every Local Authority area to have a Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB). Its role is:

(a) to coordinate what is done by each person or body represented on the Board for the purposes of safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children in the area; and

(b) to ensure the effectiveness of what is done by each such person or body for those purposes <sup>1</sup>.

An LSCB is a strategic planning and co-coordinating committee. It is not responsible for providing direct operational services. Safeguarding services to children and families are provided by local agencies under the guidance and scrutiny of the LSCB.

For the period which this annual report covers the roles and duties of LSCBs were set out in the statutory guidance *Working Together to Safeguard Children, 2010*. This was updated in March 2013<sup>2</sup>, as a result of the Munro Review<sup>3</sup>.

In November 2012 OFSTED<sup>4</sup> described the factors of an effective LSCB. During 2012 – 13 Wokingham Safeguarding Children Board (WSCB) sought to evaluate itself against these standards, which have been summarised in Appendix 8.

**This Annual Report covers the period April 2012 to March 2013**

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<sup>1</sup> Section 14 Children Act 2004

<sup>2</sup> Working Together to Safeguard Children 2013

<sup>3</sup> **The Munro Review of Child Protection:** Final Report A child-centred system DfE, May 2011

<sup>4</sup> OFSTED is the Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills – OFSTED is responsible for inspecting the quality of local services for children, including LSCBs.

## Summary of Contents

Foreword by Stephen Barber, Independent Chair

1. Executive Summary and Key Messages
2. Local Context
3. The LSCB's Achievements
4. Partner Agencies Safeguarding Assessments
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7. Key Safeguarding Data and Indicators 2012 – 13
8. Business Plan 2013 – 14

### Appendices

- 1 WSCB Structure
- 2 WSCB Membership
- 3 Budget and other resources
- 4 OFSTED – Effective LSCBs

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## Foreword

This was a challenging year for the Board. There have been a number of changes of key leaders and also of structures and systems in local public services.

The effectiveness of the Board has to be more than its meetings. We must show that decisions made, lessons learned and our vision for children is not just talk at Board meetings. They must be delivered through all our services directly to children and families.

This report shows that the WSCB is making good progress to achieve this, but is not quite there yet. At the start of the year we agreed an ambitious Business Plan, but we learned that, with the resources available, in the current public service and economic climate, it was too ambitious. There was a little delay in getting some of the actions into place.

Our key priorities, alongside our core co-ordinating role, were:

- to concentrate on early intervention to prevent children experiencing harm, and
- to combat domestic abuse and its effects on children.

We also realised that as a multi-agency strategic leadership team we needed to strengthen the way we work together as a Board; with sharper focus, better analysis, prioritising and evaluation to make sure that local agencies make a real difference. We agreed to work more smartly, to avoid duplication and to hold children and young people central to our work. We also needed to make sure that we had a good knowledge of the quality of the direct work with children, both across and within agencies.

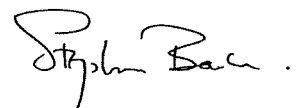
In November 2012, we had an unannounced inspection of children's services and safeguarding. That external inspection judged the Safeguarding Children Board to be 'effective' and confirmed the revised direction.

I appreciate the commitment of the key agencies, Wokingham Borough Council, especially Children's Services, Thames Valley Police, Berkshire Healthcare Foundation Trust, Primary (Health) Care, local schools and the Probation Service for seeing the safeguarding of children and their welfare as a priority by strengthening our joint planning.

The Board and member agencies are in a stronger place to ensure that this happens.

In particular we will:

- strengthen our scrutiny role to hold agencies to account for safeguarding children work;
- monitor the Domestic Abuse Action Plan;
- further develop a system of monitoring the quality of direct work with children and families, learning and improving through thorough analysis and in depth reviews;
- work closely with other key partnership bodies - Health and Wellbeing Board and Community Safety Partnership – and with them develop better ways to listen to children and young people about how best to safeguard them;
- seek to learn if there is sexual abuse or exploitation of young people in Wokingham, often a hidden crime, and if so to ascertain how much and how best to tackle it;
- help partner agencies provide more useful and user-friendly data about outcomes in safeguarding and welfare; and most importantly
- we will continue to ensure that the child protection agencies work well together, using the best research and skills when a child is thought to be being harmed or neglected, in order to ensure that steps are taken to make that child safe.



# Wokingham Safeguarding Children Board

## Annual Report 2012 -2013

### 1. Executive Summary and Key Messages

Wokingham Safeguarding Children Board (WSCB) has sought to increase its effectiveness during the business year April 2012 to March 2013. It has reviewed how it operates and how to develop a strategic leadership and scrutiny role; including through the use of peer and critical friend reviewing of partner agencies' safeguarding work.

It is seeking to move towards measuring outcomes rather than just describing what we have done but still needs to improve the way it provides data and statistics for the Board and its members.

These changes are coming in to place and the WSCB will work to implement them fully over the next business year, using the theming of reports by sector within the Board meeting agendas.

The WSCB has agreed that at each of the full WSCB meetings a substantial period of the discussion will be given over to the review of the quality of work undertaken directly with children, young people and their families.

#### Messages for Local Politicians

- Local politicians face difficult choices balancing budgets and reducing the workforce accordingly. They must ensure that reductions in staffing do not jeopardise the allocation of effective resources to safeguarding and promoting children's welfare.
- Local councillors must ensure they maintain a strategic oversight and leadership role of all those services that promote children's welfare including those in schools and the voluntary sector.
- They must continue to promote inter-agency working particularly through the Health and Wellbeing Board, Community Safety Partnership and the Local Safeguarding Children Board
- Through their links with local communities they must ensure community concerns about safeguarding and children's welfare are brought to the attention of all those with duties to respond.

#### Messages for Chief Executives and Directors

- Senior officers must ensure that their workforce is able to participate in LSCB safeguarding training, to attend training courses and learning events
- Every agency's contribution to the work of the LSCB must be categorised as the highest priority in the allocation of time and resources.
- The LSCB needs to understand the impact of any organisational restructures on the capacity to safeguard children and young people in Wokingham.
- Performance information needs to be produced and contextualized to demonstrate the effectiveness of safeguarding within services.
- Ethnicity and disability information needs to be used in a strategic context to commission relevant services.

#### Messages for the Wokingham community

- We all share responsibility for protecting children. If anyone is worried about a child, they should do something – seek advice or contact the Council's Referral and Assessment team or an agency like the NSPCC – our website will help you.
- Children and young people – your voices are the most important of all.

#### Messages for the local media

- Communicating the message that safeguarding is everyone's responsibility is crucial to the WSCB's work and the local press and media are ideally positioned to help do this.

## Wokingham Safeguarding Children Board Annual Report 2012 -2013

- The contribution of the local media to safeguarding children and young people in Wokingham through campaigns to raise public awareness about child abuse or domestic abuse is potentially very significant.

### Messages for the children's workforce

- All members of the children's workforce, from all agencies and the voluntary sector, should use safeguarding courses and learning events to keep them in touch with lessons learnt from research and best practice.
- Look out for Wokingham LSCB Multi-Disciplinary Practice Workshops where the WSCB will share lessons from local audits and reviews and national research.
- All members of the children's workforce, both paid and voluntary, should be familiar with the role of the LSCB and Berkshire child protection procedures.
- Continue to improve responses to child sexual exploitation and the identification of risk when children and young people are reported missing.

### Messages for Thames Valley Police

- Ensure adequate attendance at initial Child Protection Case Conferences.
- Ensure that referrals into children social care take account of the thresholds for statutory intervention in particular in relation to domestic abuse.
- Continue to improve identification of risk in domestic abuse cases.
- Ensure that police officers receive safeguarding training appropriate to their level and evidence this.
- Ensure police officers are able to participate in multi agency training events.

### Thames Valley Probation

- Find ways of demonstrating that the MAPPA<sup>5</sup> process and the MARAC<sup>6</sup> processes protect children from harm and promote children's wellbeing.
- Continue to support the work with children of prisoners or in contact with offenders.

### Messages for Berkshire Healthcare Foundation Trust

- To continue the work to ensure looked after children receive the best health services.
- To implement the family nurse partnership service for teenage mothers and demonstrate its effectiveness.
- To promote the think family approach within adult mental health services.
- To participate in developing early help services, ensuring health visitors and school nurses understand thresholds for statutory intervention and where to get help for families whose needs do not merit a statutory intervention.

### Messages to Clinical Commissioning Groups

- To participate in the ongoing development of multi-agency partnership working to safeguard children.
- To complete Section 11 self audits.
- To ensure all commissioned services are monitored to ensure they meet safeguarding standards and to share health safeguarding data with LSCBs

### Messages to Schools in Wokingham

Assist the WSCB by contributing to the Domestic Abuse Action Plan, the annual audit of Private Fostering, the work to support children and young people giving their views on safeguarding to the WSCB.

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<sup>5</sup> MAPPA Multi-Agency Public Protection Arrangements <http://www.justice.gov.uk/offenders/multi-agency-public-protection-arrangements>

<sup>6</sup> MARAC Multi-agency risk assessment conferences. The meetings seek to prevent domestic abuse.



## 2. Local Context

### Children and Young People Profile (March 2013)<sup>7</sup>

Wokingham Borough has approximately 39,100 children and young people under the age of 19 years. This is 25% of the total Wokingham population.

Children from minority ethnic backgrounds account for 23% of the childhood population, compared with 25% in the country as a whole. The largest minority ethnic groups are White Other, Asian Indian and Asian Pakistani.

The health and well-being of children is generally better than the England average.

Poverty and homelessness are much lower than the England average.

Children aged 5 show a good level of development, and at a better rate than the national average.

First time entrants to the youth justice system are lower.

Fewer children are looked after than the national average.

### Wokingham Borough Council

Wokingham Borough Council will have seen a 50% cut in central government funding between 2010-17. It remains an ambitious and aspirational council with a long-term view. Through physical regeneration in Wokingham the Council is seeking to develop a more vibrant local economy and thousands of new homes. To continue delivering and enabling high-quality services the Council has embarked on a process of review, change and improvement, finding more savings, more efficiencies, new and different ways of doing things.

### NHS Changes

Through the year, health services both nationally and locally were anticipating major structural changes: - the creation of NHS England regional commissioning teams, local Clinical Commissioning Groups and the dissolution of primary care trusts. New relationships are being formed with local GPs and there is a NHS Accountability and Assurance Framework 2013<sup>8</sup> that sets out safeguarding children requirements for the new structure. The Board ensured that it worked to influence and prepare for these changes and any subsequent impact on service planning and delivery.

<sup>7</sup> Child Health Profile, Wokingham March 2013 <http://www.chimat.org.uk/resource/view.aspx?RID=152672>

<sup>8</sup> Safeguarding Vulnerable People in the Reformed NHS - Accountability and Assurance Framework <http://www.england.nhs.uk/wp-content/uploads/2013/03/safeguarding-vulnerable-people.pdf>

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3. The LSCB's achievements (Analysing the Board's own work)

The Board met four times during the year, the Executive met four times and there were two business planning workshops where the Board took time to evaluate its progress, structure and governance with assistance of an external advisor.

Meetings were appropriately attended; but challenges have been ensuring representation from the Army and the voluntary sector. The Board has revised its structure and the way it agrees agenda and meetings, it has also simplified but strengthened its business planning and monitoring processes ensuring better prioritising and tracking of agreed actions. It has also agreed that in future LSCB meetings will give more time to the Board's **Learning and Improving** role.

WSCB Business Plan 2012 – 13

WSCB agreed 8 key targets, in addition to the core roles of leadership and co-ordination of multi-agency arrangements for overseeing the safeguarding and welfare of local children.

**Multi-Agency Early Intervention Strategy** – Children's Services agreed to review its Early Intervention Strategy at the beginning of the year but following a Peer Review in September 2012 by external leaders within the region it was agreed that a revised strategy was not needed. Feedback was that there were a large number of sound and well-established elements but that greater connectivity and commitment for partners was required. *The WSCB will be confirming a Multi-Agency Early Intervention Approach to support children in Wokingham and to prevent child abuse. Work on referral pathways and thresholds will be going forward in 2013-14, as part of this.*

**Domestic Abuse Strategy and Action Plan** – The WSCB worked closely with the Community Safety Partnership to agree a strategy and action plan in December 2012, which the CSP is leading.

*This is coming in to place, but not to the targeted timescales as there have been challenges in securing agency involvement – the Board has escalated this to senior officers to get it back on track.*

**WSCB Governance and Accountability** - the Board evaluated the strengths of its work, agreed a revised structure and ways of working to ensure greater accountability, better scrutiny of agency safeguarding performance and effectiveness. *These are now in place.*

**Quality Assurance Programme** – a multi-agency approach to audit was piloted; agencies have signed up to ensuring auditors are released to review the quality of inter-agency work. From these lessons Multi-Agency Practice Seminars will feed back the key findings to practitioners and managers so that knowledge and skills can be developed and embedded. *It took more time to establish than envisaged but is now in place.*

**Performance management and data analysis** – this was a weaker area for the board which has relied on social care child protection data only. The Board has now agreed to provide data in a different way in line with other Berkshire LSCBs. *A revised multi-agency data set will now be scrutinised by the Executive.*

**Auditing of early years safeguarding standards** – the Council’s Early Years Service undertook an audit of day care provision and childminders within Wokingham, using section 11<sup>9</sup> standards and lessons from the SCR into child abuse in a day nursery in Plymouth. The audit enabled more focussed support and monitoring of early years services.

**An effective training programme** – LSCB child protection training is commissioned by the joint Berkshire LSCBs Training Group.

**58 practitioners from Wokingham services attended multi-agency training in courses in safeguarding, sexual abuse, domestic abuse and parental mental health.**

**An LSCB communication plan** – The WSCB re-promoted Private Fostering duties, reminded agencies of procedures for dealing with allegations against professionals and volunteers and started the development of the WSCB’s own website. It also reviewed how best to communicate with schools in line with the Council to avoid duplication and ensure that key messages were clear.

In addition to the delivering the Business Plan, key achievements have included:

- Commenting on the Government’s proposals for the revised Working Together (2013) and Serious Case Review Framework and preparing for its implementation.
- Introduction of the ‘**signs of safety**’ model in child protection conferences to analyse the key risks and strengths in a family where there is a probability of harm so that the multi-agency child protection plan can be strong.
- Introduction of Family First (the Government’s Troubled Families Programme providing intensive and co-ordinated support to some of the most challenged families).
- Continued scrutiny of agency compliance with the section 11 (Children Act 2004)<sup>10</sup> standards for agency safeguarding systems – including initiating audits of local schools, early years and the Council.
- Scrutiny of key agencies’ performance on their activities to protect children.
- Seeking to improve local approaches to missing children and risk of sexual exploitation – but there have been difficulties with agency involvement in this and the Board has asked the police as primary leads to take the strategic lead for this across Berkshire.
- Hearing the views of children in care and of care leavers about safeguarding.
- Agreeing a new inter-agency strategy for Private Fostering by asking all local agencies to make an annual return confirming that they have audited all children in their service to identify any who may be privately fostered and referred these. As part of the audit it was discovered that agencies were confused about private fostering and their role; as a result briefings were arranged to improve this.
- Implementation of the revised safe recruitment process following changes to the national Criminal Records Bureau checking. It also established a safer recruitment working group to ensure satisfactory implementation of the Protection of Freedoms Act 2012.
- Agreeing that safeguarding children should be included as a key principle in all arrangements for commissioning and procurement of services for children and parents. This has not yet been fully implemented, but is being developed.
- A successful conference was held in September 2012 for both adults’ and children’s services staff on neglect and its effects on both children and long term on adults.
- The Board continued to press health commissioners for a designated doctor service and improvements to agency rapid responses following the death of a child and is pleased that these changes are now in place.
- The Early Years Service published a multi-disciplinary assessment tool to support parents and services in checking toddlers’ progress.<sup>11</sup>

<sup>9</sup> Section 11 Children Act 2004 sets out a duty on statutory agencies to have organisational systems to ensure that children are safeguarded – they are summarised in Working Together 2013, Chapter 2

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**Learning and Improvement – multi-agency leadership**

It is a duty of LSCBs to monitor the quality of the direct services with children and families. This can be done by case reviews and audits. There were no Serious Case Reviews in Wokingham in this period. The WSCB has reviewed the way in which it learns from practice, has initiated case audits and is establishing a Multi-Agency Practice Forum for front line practitioners and their managers to learn from audits, local and national reviews or research.

The WSCB received the lessons from a **Partnership Review**, led by an independent reviewer, into a 'near miss,' where a baby was at risk of significant harm in pregnancy and shortly after birth. The details must remain confidential but the overall lessons were:

- Practitioners need to recognise pressures on women to minimize the natural mixed feelings and worries they may have during pregnancy; antenatal support which focuses only on the physical well-being of mother and her developing baby may miss the need for additional social and psychological support.
- The benefit of involving Health Visitors ante-natally should be considered.
- If there is concern for a pregnant woman's mental health the specialist perinatal psychiatric nurse can play a valuable role in supporting the family and linking services (as was the good practice in this case).
- There was a poor understanding by practitioners of the agreed inter-agency pre-birth child protection procedures – a single agency process may not be sufficient.
- The need for shared knowledge, understanding and trust in inter-professional work between Children's Social Care and Mental Health Services; this lesson led to joint meetings and joint supervision being established to improve this.
- The provision of residential mother and baby placements and the rehabilitation of a mother and baby to the community need to be planned carefully with good assessments and information sharing.

WSCB shared these lessons at the annual conference for Wokingham, Reading and West Berkshire LSCBs and asked Partner Agencies to ensure that they were cascaded to all practitioners. In February 2013 the LSCB commissioned a multi-agency case audit to see if the lessons from this review had been embedded.

**OFSTED unannounced inspection of local authority arrangements  
for the protection of children - November 2012<sup>12</sup>**

The external inspection team reviewed the effectiveness of multi-agency arrangements in place by the Council and partners to ensure safeguarding of children. The majority of the inspection fell on the Council's children's social care service and a review of multi-agency bodies, such as the WSCB and systems for planning in relation to domestic abuse and re-offending. The inspection included seeking the views of local families.

The overall judgement was that local arrangements were 'adequate'. This showed continued improvement from the 2010 inspection which was also 'adequate', following the 2009 Joint Area review which had judged safeguarding provision in Wokingham 'inadequate' In 2012 WSCB was seen as effective in that it was scrutinising and challenging partners.

There were a number of recommendations which the WSCB has been implementing or tracking; they included:

- Clarifying the role of the Children's Partnership within the Health and Well Being Board.
- Policies and procedures relating to recruitment and retention of experienced social work staff and a comprehensive induction programme.
- Learning from audits so that improvements can be made, and monitored.

<sup>11</sup> This was written up in Nursery World in Nov 2012 : <http://www.nurseryworld.co.uk/article/1159082/unique-child-progress-check-two---decision-time>

<sup>12</sup> Available from OFSTED <http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/local-authorities/wokingham>

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- Levels of support to families to meet the risk of harm to be increased or reduced through 'step up' and 'step down' as levels of potential harm increase or reduce.
- Improving consideration of the impact of equality and diversity, as part of all strategic planning processes and in direct work with children, young people and their families.
- Ensuring that the views of children and young people are fully elicited and reflected.
- Improving quality of family histories - to be up to date and hold relevant information to understand the journey of the child.
- Effective and timely consultation processes between the probation service and children's social care about plans for offenders who have significant access to children.
- Ensuring that the individual needs of children are properly addressed, with proper consideration of ethnicity, culture, age and maturity.
- Improving information-gathering to ensure reasons for individual children going missing from education and home are understood and appropriate support is provided.
- Implementing systems to collect the views of children and young people and their parents and carers about the services that they received and using this information to develop services.
- Ensuring that learning from complaints and compliments about the work of children's social care is understood by all levels of the authority.

The WSCB has monitored actions taken to meet these recommendations.  
Not all had been achieved by the end of March 2013, but all were being taken forward.

**Inspection of Fostering Service**

The effectiveness of the Council's fostering service was judged 'Good' in January 2013.

#### 4. Partner Agencies - Safeguarding Assessments

##### Wokingham Borough Council (WBC)

The Council takes the welfare and safeguarding of children seriously. At the end of the year the Council undertook a self-audit of all departments using the section 11 Children Act 2004 standards for safeguarding children. This process has enabled the Council to consider how best to support staff according to whether they have direct access to children and families in their role. Appropriate leadership is in place and refreshed guidance, based on the revised Working Together is being arranged. Council staff, also have access to advice on what to do if they are concerned about a child.

##### Children's Social Care & Safeguarding (CSC) WBC

Children's Social Care is the lead service for protection and welfare of children. In 2012 -13 there were 5 priorities: direct social work services, services for children in care, workforce planning, partnership working and quality assurance. All focussed on more vulnerable children. CSC reports annually to the WSCB for scrutiny against the standards from the Munro Report<sup>13</sup>. The summary here evidences good child protection work and specifies where CSC has identified areas for improvement.

During the year the service has developed the capacity of the service managers, team managers and assistant team managers. Their roles and responsibilities have been reviewed to ensure high quality leadership, a focus on service priorities and a robust approach to 'Leading Change' through a training programme and access to research. The OFSTED inspection recognised that managers were supporting staff helping them to progress cases and to do a good job. All Team Manager posts became permanently staffed. Team managers and assistant team managers have undertaken refresher training in reflective and analytic supervision. An induction pack was published for all staff.

There was evidence of improving practice, including better assessment, better individualised care plans, more evident supervision, and better recording. However, there is still a need for more focus on outcomes for children and on the views and voice of the young person; and to ensure improvement in recording, with family histories and occasional case summaries. The Independent Reviewing Officers need to take a more rigorous analytical and challenging approach in chairing looked after reviews and child protection conferences. Audits show some inconsistent focus in assessments and care plans with regard to ethnic, cultural and religious needs. They showed that the views of children are not always noted. OFSTED and a recent Audit of Child Protection Plans identified the need to ensure that child protection action is not taken when the risk of harm is fairly low. More families may have been involved in child protection processes than was required.

The computerised case recording system has been positively developed. Collation of performance data for children has improved and is now reported monthly. This is a significant development, enabling better monitoring of overall performance.

A revised quality assurance framework was introduced in July 2012. It links staff supervision, appraisal and training with the learning from audits and complaints. This involved an extensive schedule of audits throughout 2012-13, by internal managers and independent auditors. 125 cases were reviewed, findings were aggregated into quarterly reports and action plans agreed SMT to influence learning and improvement.

##### **Key findings from CSC internal audits:**

- Good detail within Initial Assessments.
- Wide range of referral sources and increasing use of CAF, TAF, etc.

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<sup>13</sup> The Munro Review of Child Protection: Final Report: *A child-centred system*, Department for Education, 2011

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- Timely response to referrals and initial assessments.
- Core Assessments were mostly thorough and took account of the welfare of the child.
- Consistent evidence of children routinely being interviewed alone by the worker.
- Good use of multi-agency strategy discussions to assess and plan response to risks.
- Good multi-disciplinary work with families and evidence of good partnerships with local agencies, particularly schools and GPs.

### **Areas for development included (drawn from the review of some but not all cases)**

- Examples of risk assessment still putting too much trust in parents' assertions of improvement (without evidence).
- Race and culture needs inconsistently addressed.
- Some child protection investigations appear unnecessary.
- Inconsistent recording of the child's voice.
- Incomplete family and child protection histories.
- Some cases need more assertive attention to parental behaviour, e.g. discussion with and referral to GP.
- More evidence of the thinking of case supervisors and rationale for managers' decisions.

### **Multi-Agency child protection work**

- There is a need for more consistent attendance by key professionals at child protection conferences, core groups and reviews and a greater willingness to be 'lead professional' in cases which do not require a Child Protection Plan.
- Reports should always be submitted within the agreed timescale, to enable families to read them in advance of meetings.
- There is a need for other partners to more readily accept a 'step down' from formal child protection plan to a child in need plan.

### **Family First (national programme of targeted help to troubled families<sup>14</sup>) WBC**

Wokingham Family First was identified as one of three best practice areas by central government (DCLG) and given additional funding for this financial year, due to the impact on improving outcomes for children in year 1 of the programme.

- 77% of families experienced reduction in criminality and anti-social behaviour /ASB (and sustained this change for a minimum of six months);
- 62% of these families saw marked improvements in school attendance from an average of 20% to over 85% attendance (and sustained the change over three terms);
- Over 66% of these families saw reductions in school exclusions (and sustained the change over three terms) ;
- 20% of families returned to employment.
- There has been a reduction in evictions, over-crowding and family breakdown (often through domestic abuse) in this group.
- Family First analysis of children presenting as 'missing from education' has led to a number of recommendations for changes to systems, processes and inter-professional monitoring and review which will be reviewed by the WSCB in 2013-14.
- Early indications from pilot schools suggest that the restorative approach of taking responsibility for change and building on strengths is contributing to 'narrowing the gap' in academic achievement between those in receipt of Free School Meals (FSM) and those who are not.

*Additional government funding will enable work with a further 60 families in 2013 – 14.*

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<sup>14</sup> Department for Communities and Local Government: Working with Troubled Families - A guide to the evidence and good practice, Dec 2012

### Early Intervention and Prevention Services WBC

The service successfully achieved:

- An audit of all Children's Centres showed good work, including where the Children's Centres achieved the equality award.
- Parenting And Family Support, Primary School Parenting and Family Support Cluster practitioners were successfully integrated into primary schools.
- There was successful delivery of the 'my family matters course'.
- Delivery of restorative learning and understanding for Common Assessment Framework (CAF) panel members and other professionals.
- There was a reduction in young people not in education, employment or training (NEET). Wokingham achieved the lowest level in comparison with neighbouring local authorities.

Challenges which remain include:

- Redesign of the Children Centre to ensure a more targeted and responsive service
- Further integration of the service with partners and statutory agencies, including sharing service data and resources.
- Implementation of the **e-caf** system (electronic CAF), through a system and tool which is easily accessible for multiple professionals and can increase the number of referrals.

### Wokingham Youth Offending Service (YOS) WBC

#### **Good Practice**

**'Have Your Say'** – is a web based self-assessment tool, designed by YOS and young people. It reduces repetitive questioning and provides a novel platform for young people to contribute, demonstrating good engagement and participation. The system takes into account varied learning styles and has seen a significant difference in the quality of contribution from young people towards their assessment. The YJB asked for this to be shared as an exemplar.

YOS has also developed an integrated Risk of Serious Harm and Vulnerability Planning tool, that is central to risk and vulnerability management. A work book has also been created for young people with regard to different Court Orders. This is bound and presented to them at the end of the Order. This is working well.

YOS has created a health pack for young people, including advice from health colleagues on health promotion and drug use.

There was a good level of preventing offending, through creative engagement with young people. Wokingham YOS has prevented a higher rate of young people entering the criminal justice system or moving up to higher tariffs, such as custody. Materials developed for direct work with young people recognise differing levels of ability and have been effective in encouraging motivation and engaging young people to prevent offending or social exclusion. The Youth Justice Board complimented YOS on its strong overall performance.

Restorative practices are fully embedded in day to day practice and have had some very good results. Excellent relationships are in place with our colleagues in health, mental



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health, police, probation, Children's Social Care and Education to provide holistic support. The Risk Management Panel supports good multi-disciplinary assessment and planning for young people.

There was a reduction in First Time Entrants to the criminal justice system over the year. Performance is better than the national average and regionally. These results are due to effective prevention and work with local schools. There is also good practice to target children and young people on the edge of criminality and work with the early intervention services through CAF or referrals to children's social care. Health and substance misuse services contribute to this strong performance. Custody rates rose minimally, thus, in relative terms performance by Wokingham against custody, remains stronger than the national or local averages.

### Housing Needs Service WBC

The damaging effect of homelessness or extreme housing need on children within families is well documented. In Wokingham demand for housing outstrips resource many times over; we need to find creative and sustainable solutions. In 2012 – 13 we launched the very successful Accommodation Finder Scheme helping families move to settled accommodation. The service is easily accessible, families can receive assistance quickly.

104 possible instances of homelessness were prevented; only 14 families were judged homeless. We offered tailor-made suggestions to help customers in housing need, including the Priority Transfer scheme in cases of domestic abuse. The Service has played a key role in the Family First Programme to support some of the most troubled families. The Service worked closely through multi-agency panels in individual cases to prevent harm to children, for example through domestic abuse or repeat serious offending.

Our challenge for 2013 – 14 is to work with housing organisations more widely to ensure that safeguarding children is core to their services.

### Adult Social Care WBC

Achievements have been:

- Family First restorative practice work continues to provide good outcomes, including reductions in unemployment, school exclusion, and interface with the criminal justice system
- Joint training day for Mental Health and Children's Services took place in June 2013
- Joint working protocol in place with Mental Health and Children's services providing joint case discussion and supervision forums
- Perinatal Lead from Mental Health delivered a presentation for the Trust's staff away day was successful in raising awareness to midwives and Health Visitors and to Health Staff working in the community.
- Complex transitions are managed through the Complex Risk Panel
- Children's Services and the Adult Assessment Service have been collocated since April 2013
- Public Health transition to the Local Authority
- Establishment of the Health and Well Being Board

**Challenges which remained at the end of the year**

- The lack of a forum for Adult Social care which replicates the Protocol in Mental Health
- Improving the interface with the Housing needs Service
- Improving and maintaining joint work between Mental Health and Children's Services

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**Thames Valley Police**

Thames Valley Police has continued to develop its safeguarding children capacity in concert with partners across the force area. Key themes for the 2012-13 year were the continued development and evaluation of the Referral Centres, the development of the response to Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) and the move towards Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hubs (MASH). Good progress has been made, but there is still further work to be done in each of these areas.

Referral Centres were first launched by Thames Valley Police in October 2011 in order to ensure the most vulnerable cases are identified, the risk managed more effectively, policies and procedures applied consistently and information shared appropriately with our partners. An initial six month review, through a partnership management board with senior representatives from Children and Adult Social Care departments in the nine authorities, made recommendations to develop the system and an action plan was put in place. Of the ten recommendations from that plan eight have been completed, with a further report focusing on demand analysis due to be completed by mid-2013.

Thames Valley Police now has a fully developed CSE strategy and accompanying action plan, which has been communicated to key partners including chairs of LSCBs and heads of children's social care. The action plan includes the interim recommendations from the Office of the Children's Commissioner report into CSE published earlier this year. Wokingham LSCB has a CSE sub-group, and work is ongoing to ensure that this group has a well defined role which links effectively with work outside of Wokingham and cross-borough. This will require a strong shared understanding of the signs and symptoms of child sexual exploitation, and an ability to operate flexibly within a changing environment. The LSCB are closely monitoring the progress of the board in developing such an approach.

Early discussions have been held during the 2012-13 period in relation to establishing a number of Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hubs (MASH) across the force area. This work presents a number of challenges, particularly in the areas of Thames Valley such as Wokingham which have unitary authority structures. However it is a clear part of Thames Valley Police's plan for the 2013-14 period to work with partners across all local authority areas to establish an effective structure for the delivery of MASHs.

Safeguarding continues to be a key priority for Thames Valley Police and the 2013-14 period will see additional training for all frontline officers. Wokingham Local Police Area has already conducted a CSE awareness-raising process with frontline staff and adopted specific guidance to ensure a robust response where a CSE risk is identified. Strong local relationships exist which complement the relationships between children's social care and the specialist police departments.

**Schools in Wokingham**

<p>The WSCB is pleased to note that of the two secondary schools and sixteen primary schools inspected by OFSTED in the academic year 2012 – 13, all were judged to be effective or better in their safeguarding arrangements for pupils.</p>
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School is where older children receive the out-of-family support they need as well as education. Schools have a vital role to play in safeguarding children through recognition of possible harm, listening to children and working with parents to prevent harm and to refer children on to protection agencies, when necessary. During 2012 – 13 Wokingham schools have shown a good commitment to the work of the Board and safeguarding children. Not every school can be represented on the LSCB. There are separate networks of School Child Protection Leads for primary and for secondary, supported by Wokingham Council's Learning and Achievement Services. These link back to schools to ensure awareness of the WSCB's requirements and give an opportunity for schools to be consulted on WSCB developments. Each CP Lead is a senior member of staff in their own school; four of them are LSCB members, representing the views of all schools, including the private sector. OFSTED commented positively on this approach to involving schools. There is a strong and growing commitment but we need to do more to ensure representation and leadership of safeguarding in mainstream secondary schools.

Through this schools have considered the local infant bruising protocol; the revised Working Together guidance; the WSCB's revised approach to private fostering; the role of the LADO (the lead officer for coordinating response to allegations of concern about behaviour towards children by persons in trust); the LSCB's review of the policy on thresholds for access to services by families in need and child protection; and the importance of recognising young carers and their additional needs.

Schools want to build effective working relationships with children's social care but changes in key social care staff have raised a barrier to achieving this.

An audit of schools' compliance with section 11 standards was good and showed where improvements need to be made. For 2013 – 14 schools are seen as key and leading partners in supporting work to prevent domestic abuse, including abuse in peer relationships; and supporting the initiative to engage with and listen to the views of young people to enable the WSCB and other strategic partnerships to know what worries children in relation to safeguarding.

### Berkshire Primary Care Trust (PCT) and Strategic Health Authority

The Health and Social Care Act received Royal assent on 27 March 2012. This is the most extensive reorganisation of the National Health Service (NHS) since its inception. The Act abolished Primary Care Trusts (PCTs) and Strategic Health Authorities (SHAs). Funding for commissioning local health services was transferred to Clinical Commissioning Groups (CCGs), which became statutory bodies on 1<sup>st</sup> April 2013.

Key legislation has been amended so that CCGs have identical safeguarding children duties as those previously applying to PCTs and SHAs – i.e. to have regard to the need to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and to be members of Local Safeguarding Children Boards. The revised edition of *Working Together to Safeguard Children* (2013) sets out expectations as to how these duties should be fulfilled.

An accountability and assurance framework for safeguarding vulnerable people in the reformed NHS was published in March 2013. The framework reinforces the Government's mandate to the NHS to continue to improve safeguarding practice within the NHS.

CCGs consist of groups of General Practitioners (GPs) acting on behalf of local GPs to commission health services to meet the needs of people registered with practices in their area. The commissioning process includes responsibility for ensuring that children and vulnerable adults are safeguarded.

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There are four CCGs in the area covered by Berkshire West. Newbury & District CCG, North & West Reading CCG, South Reading CCG & Wokingham CCG. The CCGs have formed a Federation. Wokingham CCG will be the host CCG with responsibility for safeguarding.

NHS England, formerly the NHS Commissioning Board, is responsible for ensuring oversight of CCGs. This responsibility is devolved to Local Area Teams of NHS England. Berkshire is accountable to NHS England via the Thames Valley Area Team, based in Oxfordshire.

### Summary of activity and achievements 2012 – 13

- Ensured that all CCG Boards across Berkshire received training in their responsibilities to safeguard and promote the welfare of children
- Appointed a Nurse Director with CCG Board lead for safeguarding who also represents the CCGs on each of the LSCBs
- Recruited a Designated Doctor Safeguarding Children, for Berkshire, supported by Consultant Community Paediatricians in Berkshire West.
- Provided safeguarding children training updates to members of Primary Health Care Teams (PHCTs) across Berkshire
- Introduced a self-assessment audit of safeguarding arrangements in contracts, to be completed by all health services commissioned by the CCGs

### Challenges which remain

- Recruitment of a Named Nurse Safeguarding Children to work with the Named GP to support PHCTs in Berkshire West in their safeguarding activity
- Work with colleagues in GP practices to improve the contribution of GPs to the child protection process, including the provision of written reports for child protection conferences.

### Plans for 2013/14

- Continue to develop partnership working with LSCBs ensuring CCG representation on the main LSCB and appropriate sub groups
- Submission of section 11 audits on behalf of four CCGs, to LSCBs

## Public Health Services 2012 – 13

Until 31 March 2013 Public Health Services were the responsibility of the Primary Care Trusts and Strategic Health Authority. They had the primary responsibility for population wide health planning. In 2012 – 13 the Public Health Service led the Berkshire-wide multi-agency Child Death Overview Panel, which has the responsibility for reviewing the deaths of all children within Berkshire; learning any lessons and making recommendations for any changes to prevent deaths, where possible.

With the enactment of the Health and Social Care Act of 2012 and consequent dissolution of PCTs, in April 2013 NHS Berkshire's Public Health function was transferred into a number of receiving organisations, mainly into the six Unitary Authorities of Berkshire.

### Current Plans

From 1 April 2013 Public Health Services have transferred to the management of the Local Authority. There will be a Berkshire-wide group of Public Health Consultants under the leadership of a Strategic Director of Public Health for Berkshire. In Wokingham the Public Health Consultant and team take their safeguarding responsibilities seriously, and will work closely with the new Wokingham Borough Health and Wellbeing Board and the WSCB to promote the welfare and safeguarding of children at a strategic level.

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The Wokingham Consultant in Public Health is a member of the Berkshire Child Death Overview Panel, supporting a Public Health Colleague from Slough who chairs that board.

### Berkshire Health Care Foundation Trust (BHFT)

The Trust serves the whole of Berkshire, including Wokingham. The main achievements for safeguarding children included:

- Revised and Implemented Child Protection Supervision Policy which standardized and increased the provision of child protection supervision across BHFT. Those in receipt of specialist supervision include: health visitors (HVs), school nurses (SNs), community children's nurses, Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS), Family Nurse Partnership, and Looked After Children's services (LAC).
- Management of Domestic Incident Reports was developed; including the provision of guidance for BHFT staff who receive these police incident reports.
- An agency safeguarding audit (Section 11 Children Act 2004) was undertaken and, on scrutiny by the joint Berkshire LSCB Section 11 SubGroup, was judged to be 'thorough and robust'. This is monitored internally quarterly.
- Audit of quality of Case Reports. The standard of reports was found to be generally high and child focused; a new recording template has been implemented to ensure consistency across the Trust.
- Audit of Child Protection Supervision for Health Visiting, School Nursing and CAMHS clinicians. 76% of HVs/SNs were compliant with the policy; CAMHS was significantly lower. The plan is to increase compliance to 85%.
- Maintaining the contracted level of at least 85% of staff being up to date with child and adult safeguarding training has been a challenge. In February 2012 90% of staff had current child protection training. By December 2012 this was 31% for non-clinical staff and 46% for clinical employees. The factors contributing to this were that the Named Nurse for Child Protection post was vacant from June to September, and the reduced capacity of managers to release staff during an unprecedented year of high activity. By March 2013 the Child Protection Team had comprehensive training plans in place. These include in-house Level 3 Child Protection Training to ensure the highest standards of child protection and safeguarding in Paediatrics, Maternity, Sexual Health, the Emergency Department, and for Surgical and Anaesthetic Consultants who take a paediatric lead. The Executive have set a stretch target of at least 95% of staff to be up to date with child safeguarding training by October 2013.
- Processes are in place to ensure learning from Serious Case Reviews/Incidents is disseminated.
- Domestic Abuse training strategy was developed.
- Training Compliance – single agency training 90%, multi-agency training 79%. A significant improvement from March 2012.
- Establishment of an on call urgent child protection advice line for all BHFT staff.
- Provider of interagency child protection training.
- Improved internal child protection communications through intranet and newsletters.
- Safeguarding and LAC Group, providing leadership and internal assurance.

#### **Challenges and Plans for 2013-14**

- Increase compliance with supervision standards – 85%.
- Audit planned – Impact of Safeguarding Training - December 2013.
- Audit planned – Quality of Referrals to Social Care – December 2013.
- Continue raising awareness of domestic abuse as health and safeguarding issues.
- Increase of multi-agency safeguarding training to 85%.
- Promote standardization of assessment processes within CAMHS
- Within Wokingham, BHFT has taken the leadership of the inter-agency case auditing to ensure the quality of the multi-disciplinary direct work with children and parents.

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**Thames Valley Probation (TVP)**

**Policy review:** In April 2012, the Thames Probation Safeguarding Children policy and procedure was reviewed and a Thames Valley Policy statement was produced.

**Competent and confident staff:** Everyone working with families or on behalf of children and/or adults, including working with offenders who perpetrate harm, is appropriately trained. There is 'in-house' delivery of safeguarding children level 1 and 2; over 98% of practice staff have either completed the training or were scheduled to attend.

**LSCB Representation:** The Service is represented on all Local Safeguarding Children Boards within Berkshire and has undertaken audits as requested by the LSCBs.

**Safer recruitment policy and practices:** Disclosure and Barring Checks are completed and reviewed on all practice staff.

**Offender Management practice:** TVP maintains an up-to-date risk register of potential offenders across Thames Valley. This includes offenders flagged for safeguarding children concerns and provides details of cases in which there is a child who is subject of child protection planning. The attendance of probation officers at relevant child protection conferences has been steadily improving; with our aim to achieve 100%.

**Training** is provided to all practitioners and managers in Advanced Risk of Serious Harm.

**Tackling domestic abuse:** Practitioners have been trained in the 'Healthy Relationships' programme, to enable them to deliver the programme directly with offenders who have a history of domestic abuse; the materials recognise the complexity of domestic abuse and violence.

**Work with women:** TVP fully funds a Women's Community Project (a women only space) targeted at women offenders and women at risk of offending, who often have children, and partners who may be in prison.

**Challenges:**

- The Government's Rehabilitation Programme includes reforms to probation services and delivery of community sentences (widening the extent and range of providers), outsourcing of medium and low risk cases (70% of probation work) and restructuring the service into a high risk offender management unit.
- Sustaining the funding for the Women's Community Project beyond 2013-14.
- Developing a Family Approach Programme to link families of prisoners or who may be facing imprisonment to the appropriate Children Action Team.
- To continually improve home visits as a routine part in offender supervision.

**Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (CAFCASS)**

CAFCASS is responsible for looking after the interests of children involved in family proceedings in the courts. It is independent and advises the court on what is considered to be in the best interest of the child, in either private family proceedings or in public law / 'care' cases. It was not possible for CAFCASS to be directly represented on the WSCB in 2012 - 13. In 2012 – 13 across Berkshire there was a 58% decrease in private applications to the Family Courts, these are initiated by families themselves. However, for public law cases, initiated by the Local Authority, there was a 6.2% increase across Berkshire.

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Voluntary Sector

During the year the WSCB sought to work with the Voluntary Sector to support membership of and linking to the WSCB. A protocol was being developed and membership agreed to support safeguarding within this sector. However, it was not possible to progress this as there was a change in the representation for the sector. This will be a priority for the next year.

Armed Forces

The Armed Forces representative on the WSCB retired during the year and was not replaced. The WSCB has requested a representative from the Army to link with the WSCB to ensure that children within military families in Wokingham are encompassed by our local plans for safeguarding.

## 5. Work of the LSCB Sub Groups and Task Groups (see Appendix 1)

LSCB SubGroups undertake significant work to meet the LSCB's responsibilities. Some of these are co-ordinated across Berkshire or across the West of Berkshire.

### **Berkshire Policies and Procedures Sub Group**

The Berkshire-wide child protection policies and procedures<sup>15</sup> are online. The Policy and Procedures sub-group ensures they are regularly updated. Revised procedures include guidance on forced marriages, and management of concealed pregnancy, with new links inserted to guidance maintained elsewhere, such as 'Protecting Children and Young People – the Responsibilities of all Doctors' (GMC 2012). Changes also included improvements to hospital discharge arrangements. The online procedures are being updated in line with the revised *Working Together 2013*.

### **Berkshire Section 11 Sub Group**

All statutory or commissioned organisations that provide services to children and families are responsible for ensuring that they meet Section 11 of the Children Act 2004, in relation to safeguarding and child protection. The pan-Berkshire group reviewed agency self-audits, against these standards. The majority showed that they met and exceeded the minimum standards for safeguarding children.

### **Berkshire LSCBs (West and East) Training Sub Group**

- Training needs analyses were completed and reported to all boards.
- Courses specific to local need were provided including, neglect, domestic abuse, safer care for children of parents with mental health issues, e-safety, and child development. There were 320 attendees from partner agencies across Berkshire (including 56 from Wokingham)
- A training 'pathway' was published to aid understanding of training required by each staff group and subsequently offered
- Quality assurance of the courses ensured that the content was child focused.
- Staff who attended LSCB courses expressed greater confidence.
- Courses included lessons from serious case reviews and enabled practical skill development.
- The sub group gave partner agencies advice and promoted informal and formal training events between agencies.
- Health agencies opened courses to partner agencies.
- A joint LSCB safeguarding children and adults conference day was provided for all partner agencies in the West of Berkshire – its focus was sharing responsibility with families for safeguarding children at risk of neglect. Over 100 practitioners attended.

#### Challenges:

- Monitoring the quality of single agency safeguarding training.
- More audits on the quality of training may be required.
- Multi agency training compliance in Berkshire West indicated 389 staff needed to access training at the end of 2012-2013.

### **Berkshire Child Death Overview Panel**

The panel reviews all child deaths in Berkshire and advises the LSCBs of any trends. A newsletter raises awareness of issues; e.g. safer sleeping for babies. There was a reduction in perinatal and neonatal mortality, from 75 in 2011-12 to 34 in 2012-13 across Berkshire. This exceptional reduction was most likely due to the change in status of local district general hospitals to Local Neonatal Units enabling transfer of high-risk neonates to a

<sup>15</sup>Berkshire LSCB Child Protection Procedures <http://berks.proceduresonline.com>



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specialist centre (typically the John Radcliffe Hospital, Oxford). This process appears to have a genuinely positive impact in reducing neonatal mortality.

The Audit of the 2012/13 Rapid Response to child deaths in Berkshire determined that the response of frontline and Emergency Department staff was generally good, with close multi-agency team working. Specific learning points/next steps highlighted included:

- Communication with out-of-area hospitals and multi-agency teams is an ongoing systemic problem.
- The need to re-emphasise 'Back to Sleep' and parental smoking avoidance advice – particularly among parents from BME (Black and Minority Ethnic) backgrounds.
- Multi-agency meetings were held in all cases, and social care assessments were undertaken when appropriate; but visits to the scene of death or health crisis preceding death, were not always made. Consideration should be given to making more such visits.
- There is a need to communicate with non-resident parents following a child's death.
- The Rapid Response process is an invaluable tool for seeking information and providing support. Rapid Response is not only applicable to unexpected deaths, but also in cases where the child is critically unwell and not expected to survive.

### **Berkshire Safer Recruitment Task and Finish Group**

This group was led by Reading LSCB. Its purpose was to ensure the new arrangement set out in the Protection of Freedoms Act 2012 was understood and was reflected in safer recruitment practice in partner agencies. New guidance has been drafted for all organisations for inclusion in the online Berkshire child protection policies and procedures. This will be updated as new guidance is rolled out by the national Disclosure and Barring Service.

### **WSCB Monitoring and Evaluation Sub Group**

The group commissioned local four 'section 11' audits: one for Early Years Services & Out of School Clubs and (separately) Childminders; one for all Schools; and one for the Council (see the Council's report above). It initiated the multi-agency audit programme and reviewed safeguarding data and performance measures.

The Early Years section 11 audit included awareness of the lessons from the Serious Case Review into the incident of abuse within a day nursery in Plymouth. The findings showed that the WSCB and the Early Years and Childcare Representative need to increase the profile of the WSCB to the Childcare Sector in Wokingham Borough and ensure key messages and learning reach front line staff. This is being done through a new WSCB Communications Sub Group which includes an Early Years' representative. Few Childminders responded to the survey and this will be considered in any future commissioning arrangements.

All of the Early Years and Out of School Clubs were aware of the role of the LADO and knew how to make contact. 97% of Childminders were aware of how to ask for support and advice in relation to safeguarding concerns. The Wokingham Borough Council's Early Years and Childcare Team has followed up the findings to offer guidance and support where needed.

The Schools' Section 11 audit showed good awareness of safeguarding and arrangements within maintained schools but there was a poor return from independent, voluntary sector schools and mainstream academies, which the WSCB will address in 2013 – 14.

During the year the SubGroup advised on concern in relation to safeguarding within local Childminding inspections by OFSTED and wrote to OFSTED seeking clarification of the standards and findings used.

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The decision has been made for 2013 – 14 to split the functions of the Monitoring and Evaluation Sub-Group. A Quality Assurance SubGroup has been established to provide strong lead for Learning and Improvement, drawing on the lessons from case auditing and any case reviews or national learning. The WSCB will improve its overview of local safeguarding data and performance by joining the Berkshire West LSCBs Performance SubGroup; this is as part of a wider aim to re-initiate the Berkshire-wide Data Information. The Quality Assurance SubGroup will report direct to the WSCB with greater time in Board meetings given over to discussing the findings for the multi-agency case audits. The revised Data Set will be reviewed by the Executive.

### **Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) & Missing Children Task and Finish Group**

In the light of national concern about the possible sexual exploitation of young people from highly publicised trials during the year the WSCB agreed to bring together two strands of overview and planning into this one task group – linking work to prevent harm to children who may go missing and the risk of sexual exploitation. At the end of the year it was agreed that the Thames Valley Police would provide the multi-agency leadership in this area. The WSCB also recommended to the other Berkshire LSCBs that a Berkshire-wide SubGroup strategy and approach, in line with the Thames Valley Police strategy would be appropriate. It will be important to continue to raise awareness and ensure that all secondary schools, YOS, social care and the Police remain vigilant for possible cases and refer then for support as set out in the Berkshire child protection procedures. Work within the Domestic Abuse Action Plan will be linked to this as some forms of peer abuse are ‘exploitation’ and/or can also lead to children going missing.

Awareness will be raised within local schools by performances of **Chelsea’s Choice** in the autumn. This is a structured drama for young people.

The WSCB agreed to joint fund online training for practitioners in understanding CSE and Partner Agencies have agreed to promote this and other relevant training to staff.

### **Wokingham Emotional Well-Being Task Group**

The Task Group considered in depth what ‘emotional need’ entailed for children and young people, and the varying degrees of emotional need experienced by some children at different times of their lives and life journeys. A ‘deep dive’ audit and review of open cases showed children support and services were not always responding to children most at need, especially for those needing more specialist and longer term intensive support.

A mapping exercise showed a variety of services were available but thresholds were unknown and waiting lists not publicised. Work was done to up-date the online service directory.

Some of the Task Group met with young service users to ascertain their views and wishes on current and future services and the online database. Their input was invaluable – they had a focus regarding self-harm and highlighted the lack of relevant information. This has been commissioned. The importance of online resources to young people was also made very clear. Pathways to services are now more refined

### **Serious Case Review Group**

The WSCB does not have a standing Serious Case Review Overview Group but convenes meetings as necessary, through the Executive or by action of the Independent Chair. The group makes recommendations to the WSCB Independent Chair on the need for a serious

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case review when there is a critical incident. There were no SCRs initiated within Wokingham in 2012 – 13. The WSCB has assisted one other LSCB in a Partnership Review for a child who was seriously harmed, where Wokingham agencies had had some prior minimal contact, but where there were no concerns about the quality of practice. At the end of the year the WSCB agreed to assist another LSCB in providing reports for a Serious Case Review where a young person had died. The lessons from this review are not yet available.

The WSCB has anticipated the revised guidance on SCRs in Working Together 2013 and will consider the most appropriate methodology for such a review should the need arise. In the interim it has agreed to use the terminology of ‘child practice review’ as promoted in the Welsh Assembly’s: ‘Guidance for Arrangements for Multi-Agency Child Practice Reviews’.<sup>16</sup>

As part of its Learning and Improving role the WSCB is establishing Multi-Agency Practice Workshops for the dissemination of lessons from local, regional and national SCRs or other case reviews and research. Feedback to practitioners from local case audits will also be shared and cascaded through these workshops.

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<sup>16</sup> <http://wales.gov.uk/docs/dhss/publications/121221guidanceen.pdf>

## 6. Participation and engagement with children and young people

The WSCB has recognised the need to have opportunities to listen to children and young people, particularly about safeguarding.

The Board had good evidence that the views of particularly vulnerable children and young people were being sought when they were in the Council's care or in receipt of support from the Youth Offending Service. The Community Safety Partnership also consults with young people. The account from the Emotional Well-Being Task Group above shows good outcome from consultation with young people in service review and planning.

The WSCB commended partner agencies to adopt similar approaches to listening to children to those which were used in work with young people in the Council's care.

Children's Services is considering how best to develop Participation and Engagement with young people, which includes wider groups, such as school councils and youth groups. It has been agreed that as part of these wide approaches the WSCB Chair and Development Manager will meet, where appropriate, direct with young people's representatives to discuss their views about safeguarding. It is understood from school representatives on the WSCB that young people are concerned about bullying, use of the internet and abuse through mobile technology, and pressures in peer sexual relationships. An approach to this has been included in the Domestic Abuse Action Plan as peer sexual abuse is now part of the legal definition of domestic abuse for older young people.

## 7. Key Safeguarding Data and Indicators 2012 – 13

There was a significant increase of child protection referrals to children's social care in 2012-13, nearly 20% more than the previous year.

A higher number of both initial and core assessments were completed. This was a challenge to resources and the completion of risk assessments within advised timescales. However, by the end of the year timeliness for initial assessments was above the England average. The OFSTED inspection mid way through the year suggested that more families were being assessed for child protection than was needed. The WSCB review of threshold criteria and the development of the Multi-Agency Strategic Hubs for information sharing and joint decisions about need or risk will assist in reducing the number of families coming into the child protection process when there is not a need.

Numbers of children being referred for help a subsequent time remained high and also increased over the year. There was also a significant increase in the proportion of children made subject to a CP Plan for a second time.

Full year data 1 April 2012 – 31 March 2013 or Data at 31 March 2013 as indicated	Number
<b>Common Assessment Framework</b>	
First CAF	104
Second or subsequent CAF	17
CAF where a Referral for Service to Social Care as Child In Need had been completed previously	79
The majority of CAFs discussed at the CAF Panel resulted in a Team Around the Family Approach (TAF)	118
<b>Children in Need and Child Protection</b>	
Referrals to social care	1064
Referrals which led to initial assessments	1008
Referrals which led to core assessments	553
Section 47 - 'child protection' enquiries	233
Initial Child Protection Conferences	57
Children subject of Initial Child Protection Plan during year to 31 March 2103 (including transferred from another Local Authority)	77
Children subject of a CP Plan at 31 March 2013	65
By category: Neglect	32
Physical abuse	3
Sexual abuse	0
Emotional abuse	23
Multiple categories	7
Child Protection Plans which ended within the year	83
Number of Child Protection Plans started where the child had previously been subject of a CP Plan	28
<b>Looked After Children</b>	
Number of children looked after at 31 March 2013	86
Number of children subject to Interim Care Orders at 31 March 2013	18
Number of Children subject to full Care Orders at 31 March 2013	38
Number of 'voluntary' section 20 accommodations at 31 March 2013	29

8.

### WSCB Business Plan 2013 – 14

The core roles and tasks for Local Safeguarding Children Boards are set out in Working Together 2013. In addition to those core roles Wokingham Safeguarding Children Board has agreed the following priorities for the next year.

- Complete the actions arising from the OFSTED Action Plan
- Support the Community Safety Partnership to monitor the Domestic Abuse Strategy and Implementation from a children and young people's perspective – including Peer Abuse by young people
- Confirm and Implement the revised Early Intervention Approach
- Ensure that WSCB and its Partners receive good quality local multi-disciplinary Safeguarding Data
- Implement the Annual Agency and Board Safeguarding Reports and Self-Evaluation with Peer Scrutiny, in a themed rolling programme
- Ensure that the WSCB and its Partner Agencies implement the revised statutory safeguarding guidance (Working Together 2013); particularly the changes to 'learning and improving', including serious case reviews
- Monitor the work to assess the extent of any risk of sexual exploitation of young people, and if found, to respond to it – including Peer Abuse and use of Social Media
- Maintain the regular review of the quality of multi-disciplinary direct work with children and families to prevent harm – through the programme of multi-agency case audits
- Encourage the voice of children, young people, (families and communities) being heard within all agency and multi-agency work and for the WSCB itself to work to create opportunities to listen to children and young people directly on their views about safeguarding
- Monitor all agencies' compliance with the WSCB's revised Private Fostering Strategy, through an annual audit of all agencies
- Implement the Safeguarding and Commissioning Strategy
- Complete the review of WSCB Structure and Governance and implement any agreed changes to ensure that Wokingham Safeguarding Children Board is effective

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The WSCB reviews progress against each of these targets in its quarterly meetings

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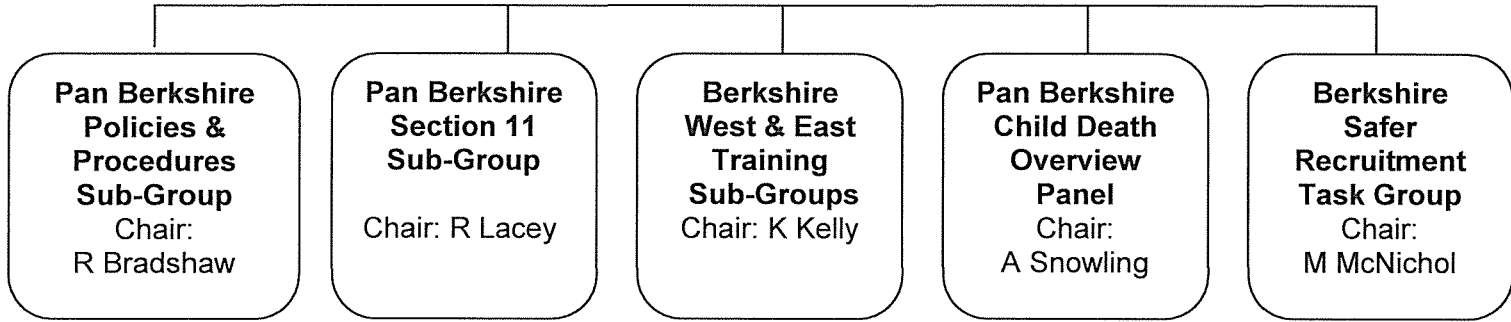
Appendix 1

Wokingham Safeguarding Children Board

Independent Chair: Stephen Barber  
Accountable to the Wokingham Borough Council Chief Executive  
(Also the Chair of Reading LSCB and West Berkshire LSCB)

**Executive**  
Meets 4 times per year  
Strategic & Decision-making  
Manages the joint budget

**Wokingham Safeguarding Children Board**  
Meets 4 times per year  
Consultative, Scrutiny, Peer Review, Planning  
Learning and Improving  
Themed Agenda  
**Strategy & Business Planning Meetings**  
Twice a year the Executive and Board meet to agree priorities, strategy and formulate the Business Plan for future years.



Wokingham Sub Groups and Task Groups

**Monitoring & Evaluation Sub Group\***  
Chair:  
B Grady

**Emotional Health & Well-Being Task Group**  
Chair:  
I Livingstone

**Missing Children & Child Sexual Exploitation Task Group**  
Chair:  
P Kerswell

Berkshire wide sub-groups are accountable to the six LSCBs across Berkshire.  
Berkshire West sub-groups are accountable to Reading, Wokingham & West Berkshire LSCBs.  
The Wokingham Monitoring and Evaluation Sub Group has been divided for 2013 – 14 to create a Quality Assurance SubGroup (for Audits, Learning and Improvement) and Wokingham SCB is planning to join the Reading and West Berkshire Sub Group for Data and Performance Monitoring.  
The Wokingham Serious Case Overview Group was not convened in 2012 – 13.

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**Appendix 2**

**WSCB Membership**

<b>Statutory Members:</b>			<b>Apr 2012 – Mar 2013</b>	
<b>Name</b>	<b>Role</b>	<b>Agency</b>	<b>Joined</b>	<b>Left</b>
Stephen Barber	Independent Chair	Independent		
Andy Couldrick	Chief Executive	Wokingham Council		
Pauline Maddison	Strategic Director of Children's Services (Interim)	Wokingham Council	June 2012	
Brian Grady	Strategic Commissioner for Children, Young People & Families	Wokingham Council		
Colin Poynter	Connexions Manager	Berkshire Connexions		Sept 2012
Kazem Bholah	Wokingham CAMHS Manager	Berkshire Healthcare Foundation Trust		Dec 2012
Rita Morrison	Wokingham CAMHS Manager	Berkshire Healthcare Foundation Trust	Dec 2012	March 2013
Louise Noble	Wokingham CAMHS Manager	Berkshire Healthcare Foundation Trust	March 2013	
Christian Bunt	Chief Inspector Wokingham LPA Commander	Thames Valley Police		March 2013
Rob France	Chief Inspector Wokingham LPA Commander	Thames Valley Police	March 2013	
Christine Dale	Head of Mental Health	Wokingham Council		
Julie Penny	CAFCASS Service Manager Berkshire Team	CAFCASS	June 2012	
Teresa De Vito	Service Manager Q.A. Safeguarding	Wokingham Council	June 2012	March 2013
Judith Ramsden	Head of Social Care and Safeguarding	Wokingham Council		
Bev Searle/ Jenny Selim	Director of Partnerships and Joint Commissioning	NHS Berkshire		
David Cahill	Director- Wokingham Locality	Berkshire Healthcare Foundation Trust	June 2012	
Debbie Daly	Nurse Director	Berkshire West CCG Federation	March 2013	
Rachael Wardell	Head of Strategy & Partnerships	Wokingham Council		March 2013
Jude Whyte	Housing Needs Manager	Wokingham Council		
Kevin Williams	Senior Probation Officer	Thames Valley Probation		
Richard Stanley	Head of Learning & Achievement	Wokingham Council	June 2012	March 2013
Shellye Hanson	Service Manager Early Years, Childcare & Play	Wokingham Council		
Pat Reynolds	Voluntary Sector			June 2012
Michelle Wooff	Voluntary Sector		Dec 2013	
<b>Agencies and organisations who are not Statutory but are full Members and expected to attend all meetings</b>				
Captain Doug Devlin	Army Welfare Services			Dec 2012
Caroline Norris	Primary Schools Rep	Colleton Primary School		
Bill Mahony	WSCB Lay Member			
Cllr Rob Stanton	Lead Member Children's Services & Deputy Leader	Wokingham Council		March 2012
Cllr Charlotte Haitham-Taylor	Lead Member Children's Services	Wokingham Council	June 2012	
Peter Whittaker	WSCB Lay Member			
Ian Ayre	Secondary School Rep	Addington School		
Nick Harvey	Secondary School Rep	Southfield School		



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Appendix 3                      WSCB Budget

**Income and planned Expenditure 2012-13**

<b>Income</b>	<b>£</b>
Local Authority	<b>35,555.00</b>
PCT	<b>20,500.00</b>
Police	<b>2,500.00</b>
Probation	<b>895.00</b>
CAFCASS	<b>550.00</b>
BHFT	
Schools	<b>25,000.00</b>
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>85,000.00</b>
<b>Expenditure</b>	<b>£</b>
Employee & Service costs	<b>47,332.00</b>
CDOP	<b>5,300.00</b>
Tri X Procedures	<b>3,600.00</b>
Training	<b>3,600.00</b>
Communications	<b>6,000.00</b>
Project costs	<b>9,168.00</b>
SCR Contingency	<b>10,000.00</b>
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>85,000.00</b>

Wokingham Borough Council has provided the following additional support staff and provides the Board's work space and resources in addition to its contribution to the joint WSCB Budget

<b>Board Support: Attend all Meetings and Sub Groups and work on behalf of the Board</b>		
Jo Jolly	Business Manager WSCB	Wokingham Borough Council
Alison Welch	Business Support WSCB	Wokingham Borough Council
Malcolm Ward	<i>Interim WSCB Development Manager</i>	Independent

These roles were part-time.

Appendix 4 (OFSTED<sup>17</sup> Presentation November 2012)

**An effective LSCB will have the following characteristics**

- A strong enquirer and challenger of effective frontline practice with children, young people and families and can describe the features
- Understands the intended and actual impact of practice
- Sees and uses children's journeys and experiences as a key measure of the difference being made locally
- Understands performance information and uses to understand story behind data – a questioner
- Understands early help and child protection thresholds but accepts the importance of professional judgement in assessing risk for children and families – is adaptive in response
- Understands and acts upon the experiences of other agencies in helping and protecting children, young people and families
- Is deeply searching for system feedback and learning from that knowledge
- Already has and regularly reviews local multi-agency professional guidance and procedures for helping and protecting children and young people – including advice for adult services
- Understands and works strategically with the Health and Well Being board in respect of the shared agenda for helping and protecting children, young people and families
- Reviews the breadth and impact of early help, support for children 'in need' and child protection practice – including outcome and 'destination' measures
- Understands the impact and quality of supervision for professional frontline staff
- Leads a case-auditing system that provides learning about the quality of practice, the recording of decisions and practice intent, the quality of management oversight, professional judgement and minimisation of risk
- Evidences independence, accountability, transparency and robust challenge of the local system

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This report will be submitted for comment and scrutiny to the Wokingham Borough Council Chief Executive; the Wokingham Borough Council Overview and Scrutiny Committee; the Wokingham Health and Well Being Board; and the Police and Crime Commissioner for their review and comment.

Comments will be considered by the WSCB Executive at its meeting in the Autumn of 2013 for future business planning by the WSCB.

If you wish to make comment on this report or the work of the WSCB please send them to:

Wokingham Safeguarding Children Board  
c/o Wokingham Borough Council  
Shute End  
Wokingham  
Berkshire  
RG40 1BN

September 2013

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<sup>17</sup> OFSTED is the Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills – OFSTED is responsible for inspecting the quality of local services for children, including LSCBs.

